

STAR TREK: DEEP SPACE NINE

10x16 - "I Will Survive."

Screenplay by Martyn Dunn

Based on characters from the series

Star Trek: Deep Space Nine

and from the post-finale novels
by Pocket Books

TEASER

FADE IN:

1 INT. DS9 - PROMENADE

The Infirmary doors open, and ETANA KOL walks out. Strolls along a bit, nods hello to an extra. Heads into Security...

2 INT. DS9 - SECURITY OFFICE (CONTINUOUS)

...but stops short in surprise when she realises Major CENN is sat behind the desk. He looks up at her entrance...

ETANA

Oh. Hello.

CENN

Hi. Can I help you, Sergeant?

ETANA

I was looking for Laren - it's twelve hundred. Time for our regular physiotherapy session.

CENN

The Lieutenant's not here, I'm afraid.

ETANA

Yeah, I see that. Where is she?

CENN

Kel-Artis, apparently. I woke up this morning to new orders that I'm covering as security chief until she gets back.

ETANA

Kel-Artis? What's she doing all the way out there?

CENN

Starfleet tactical seminars, she said. Or her message said, anyway.

ETANA

Well, I wish she'd told me. I could have made other plans. Like maybe have something to eat at lunchtime like normal people do.

CENN

I'm no wiser than you, Sergeant. It must have been a pretty vital seminar for her to run off and leave me in charge.

ETANA

Maybe they had somebody who needed yelling at, and they wanted the best yeller in Starfleet.

CENN

(chuckle)

I'm sure that must be it. Still, can't complain. Now Commander Dax is back, I was starting to feel a bit superfluous in Ops.

QUARK enters, takes one look at them, purses unimpressed...

QUARK

Where is she?

CENN

Not here.

QUARK

She wouldn't leave without saying goodbye to me. So where is she?

ETANA

Apparently there was an urgent seminar that was more important than a polite "See you soon."

QUARK

Polite?! Wait, we are talking about Ro Laren here, right?

They all chuckle again.

3 INT. DS9 - MAIN OPS CENTRE

KIRA and DAX are both at the main Ops table, SHAR and NOG at their stations. A turbolift arrives, carrying TENMEI...

TENMEI
Ummm... Captain?

Shar perks up at the sound of her voice, watches her head down to the table, blank and inscrutable. Nog looks up at Shar's reaction, silently watching the other two...

KIRA
Lieutenant. What can I do for you?

TENMEI
I was just wondering if you know where my dad is? We usually meet for lunch, and he didn't show.

KIRA
Sorry, he's got meetings all day. The commander of the recruitment centre down in Musilla, the security chief there, they're talking about setting up a training annex as well, I think... He's gonna be tied up all day. He didn't tell you?

TENMEI
I guess not.

KIRA
I'm sure he meant to. Tell you what - when I see him, I'll give him a slap just for you.

TENMEI
(chuckle)
Thanks.

Tenmei turns away - and sees Shar looking at her. He looks away, as if caught out. Then he tentatively looks back...

...she's still looking at him, a mix of longing and regret and apology. She can't express any of that, however...

...so she simply aims a stiff nod of acknowledgement. He does likewise. They both turn back to their own business.

Nog has seen the entire silent exchange. As Tenmei leaves Ops, he shakes his head with an exasperated sigh. *Hew-mons*. Why do they have to make everything so complicated?

Tenmei having gone, Dax turns to Kira and speaks *sotto*...

DAX

I thought Vaughn hated meetings -
I'm surprised he didn't try to
palm them off on me.

KIRA

Are you saying you want them?

DAX

Gods, no.

An ALERT on her panels - Dax checks it, frowns...

DAX

There's a Trill transport just
entering the system. They've
requested permission to dock.

KIRA

Are we expecting anyone?

DAX

Not that I know of. Vannis's ship
is due in an hour, but nobody said
anything about a Trill transport.
Evidently today is "let's not tell
anybody what we're doing" day.

(new alert)

They're hailing.

KIRA

Okay, put them through.

Dax presses controls, they turn to look at the viewscreen -

- and it comes to life with the image of HIZIKI GARD. The Trill man looks out at them with calm professionalism...

GARD (screen)
Captain Kira. Lieutenant Dax. A
pleasure to see you again.

DAX
It's Lieutenant Commander Dax now,
thank you Mister Gard.

GARD (screen)
(small smile)
My apologies, Commander.

Dax is obviously not happy to see him. Kira is rather wary
too, since the last time he was here, he killed Shakaar...

KIRA
Mister Gard... What can we do for
you?

GARD (screen)
I'd like to come aboard, if I may,
Captain. And bring a guest with me.

KIRA
A guest?

GARD (screen)
Yes. I'm afraid it's a rather
delicate situation, and only
Lieutenant Commander Dax can help
me to resolve it.

Kira and Gard both look to Dax for her response. Her face
reveals that she's not looking forward to this...

BLACK OUT:

END OF TEASER

ACT ONE

FADE IN:

4 EXT. DEEP SPACE NINE - ESTABLISHING

A Trill transport (like the one seen in 8x21 "Lesser Evil") has now docked at the station near to the *Defiant*...

5 INT. DS9 - DOCKING RING CORRIDOR

Dax waits uncertainly as the airlock rolls open to reveal -

- GARD. He smiles down at her, fully aware that this will be an uncomfortable meeting. But he bears her no malice...

GARD

Dax.

DAX

Gard. You said you had a...
situation?

GARD

I do. Allow me to introduce...

He steps aside to reveal another man behind him, another Trill. Youngish, in a plain drab jumpsuit, looking downcast and distant. His hands are also bound together in front of him with metal handcuffs. His name is KINJER ODAN...

GARD (cont)

...Kinjer Odan.

DAX

Odan?!

The two men by now have stepped down into the corridor - Odan still only half-there and being gently guided...

GARD

Yes.

DAX

Is he... drugged? And why is he
handcuffed?

GARD

For his own good, Commander. For his own safety. And I'd rather not talk about it in a corridor.

Dax frowns, very unclear on all this. Eventually she nods her reluctant assent and leads them down the corridor...

6 INT. DS9 - DAX'S QUARTERS

Dax watches compassionately as Gard gently guides Odan into the room. Leads him shuffling to the couch, sits him down.

That done, Gard looks around the room. It looks temporary, with no personal effects or sign of having been lived in...

GARD

You're not staying?

DAX

No. Just waiting until my next assignment comes up.

Gard nods, considering that...

DAX

Get to the point, Gard. Odan is one of the oldest and most respected symbionts I know of. What have you done to him?

GARD

I haven't done anything at all. He's... sick.

DAX

Then why bring him all the way here? Surely all the doctors you need are back on Trill.

GARD

Not that kind of sick.

Dax looks over to Odan, slumped on the couch, barely aware of where he is, and realises what Gard means...

DAX

Are you saying... he's a bad
joining? Like Joran?

GARD

Nothing that dangerous yet. He
hasn't hurt anybody. Well...
anybody but himself, at least.

Sympathetic, Dax goes over to the couch, sits next to Odan.
Brushes the hair off his face, feels his dull and lifeless
skin. He seems at least slightly aware she is there...

DAX

That's why you restrained him?

GARD

It's my job, Commander. I handle
aberrant joinings - those rare
mistakes where symbiont and host
do not mesh the way they should.

(beat)

Kinjer received the Odan symbiont
around two years ago, after its
previous host died when your friend
Verad poisoned the water supply.

DAX

Hadn't he been through all the
training? The checks, the scans,
the psych evaluations?

GARD

Yes. He was perfectly suitable.

DAX

Then what went wrong?

GARD

We don't know. At first we thought
it was a reaction to the mass
deaths of so many symbionts from
the Neo-Purist attacks. He'd been
off world at the time, so we
thought maybe, survivor's guilt.
But it kept going. Getting worse.

DAX
(realising)
He tried to kill himself?

GARD
Several times. None of our people
can seem to help him. So I brought
him to you.

DAX
Why me? What can I do that all of
Trill can't?

GARD
All of Trill is oversensitive to
anything to do with joining right
now. There are so few of us left,
we're becoming like celebrities.
It's easier to be away from home.
As for you... well, you know Odan.
You know me. And you've been in an
aberrant joining yourself.

DAX
(bitter)
I know you because you killed me
to end that joining.

GARD
(calm)
As I said... that's my job.

DAX
Well counselling isn't mine, not
anymore.
(re collar)
I switched to command in case you
didn't notice. I can set you up
with Counsellor Matthias --

GARD
Not Counsellor Matthias. You. I'm
asking for your help, Dax.

Dax really doesn't want to do this. But looking at Odan's
pitiful condition, she can't help but feel sympathy...

7 **EXT. SPACE - FREIGHTER SHIP**

A random clumsy freighter ship travels at low warp...

 RO (v.o.)
I wouldn't object to knowing what
it is precisely I'm trying to
accomplish here.

8 **INT. FREIGHTER - CARGO BAY**

Low tech, lights are dark, the space is crammed full, and no money has been wasted - certainly not on cleaning.

VAUGHN and RO are both in grimy civvies, jammed in between various boxes and crates, and urgently working together at an open panel in the bulkhead. Only about a foot square, it bristles with pulled out wires and blinking lights...

 VAUGHN
Yes, sorry. I guess I'm not used
to explaining things to people.
Once you've got access to the
freighter's transponder array, I'm
going to piggy-back an additional
signal onto it - send a message.

 RO
They won't detect it?

 VAUGHN
There's a subtle way of altering
the signal to insert a new message
into the already existing medium.
Only someone who knows what to
look for would see it.

 RO
Alright. Then what?

 VAUGHN
Our contact will pass it on. Mean-
while I have my own contacts who
will help us trace L'Haan's move-
ments since her ship vanished.

RO
And what about Julian?

Awkward pause. Vaughn concentrates on his work...

RO
Commander?

VAUGHN
We'll see.

Suddenly Ro turns, SLAMS her back against the open panel, hiding it from sight. She GRABS Vaughn fiercely and YANKS him towards her, mashing his face into hers. She makes out with him ferociously - he's too surprised to argue.

Lurking, we can now see another figure in the cargo bay - the freighter's alien PILOT. Vaughn senses his presence as well, and responds to Ro's advances. She lifts up both legs and wraps them around his waist as he grinds against her...

PILOT
Ahem.

Vaughn and Ro both turn their heads to look at him, annoyed to have been interrupted. The Pilot sneers salaciously...

PILOT
Little old for you, isn't he?

RO
Screw you.

VAUGHN
I paid plenty to get on this ship.
What we do to pass the time is
none of your business.

PILOT
I suppose not. Although I do
appreciate the entertainment
value. Thought you might want to
know we're nearing orbit.

Ro caresses the side of Vaughn's face lustily...

RO
Then we'll be sure to make the
most of our time.

PILOT
Oh, please... do carry on.

Vaughn and Ro both glower at him menacingly. With a roll of the eyes, the Pilot turns and leaves. Once he's gone, Ro lowers her legs and Vaughn steps back. Both recover their composure. No point in being bashful - it was necessary.

VAUGHN
Good ears.

Ro stretches her back out, winces a little. Steps away, revealing the open panel again...

RO
Good reflexes too. Let's get back
to work.

They both turn back to the open panel, and work on it more urgently than ever...

9 EXT. DEEP SPACE NINE - ESTABLISHING

Now joining the *Defiant* and the Trill transport is Dominion Vessel 288, just parking at an upper pylon...

10 INT. DS9 - KIRA'S OFFICE

Kira looks up from her work and sees VANNIS approaching the door through Ops. She presses the control to open the door, and Vannis strolls in. Kira stands to greet her...

KIRA
Thank you for coming, Vannis.
Please take a seat.

Vannis perches in the guest seat, legs crossed haughtily...

VANNIS
(slight edge)
Always a pleasure to meet with our
honoured Bajoran allies.

KIRA

Straight to the point, I see.
Alright then... What are we going
to do about Taran'atar?

VANNIS

"Do," Captain? What makes you think
there is a need to "do" anything?

KIRA

(sympathetic)

Come on. We both know that he's
blocking the alliance for some
reason. Odo would want us to work
together. It's one of the main
reasons he returned to the Great
Link in the first place.

VANNIS

Odo assigned First Taran'atar as
the Dominion Ambassador here. Not
me, or you, or himself. It is
Taran'atar's decision to make.

KIRA

Ambassadors should still follow
their government's instructions.

VANNIS

Taran'atar no longer has the
instinctive need to follow the
commands of the Founders.

KIRA

But he promised he still would. He
thinks he should, whether he has
to or not. Or at least he used to.

This is all awkward for Vannis. She actually agrees with
Kira, but she can't openly say so. She's in a bind here...

VANNIS

Captain, we've been through this
already. I was ordered by the
Founder to follow Taran'atar's
commands. I must obey.

Kira sags. There has to be a way to figure this out...

KIRA

Can you contact Odo directly? Or
give me the transmission codes to
contact him myself?

VANNIS

No. Taran'atar has ordered me not
to contact the Founder, or to
allow anyone else to do so either.
He is the officially appointed
ambassador of the Dominion. I must
obey. To be frank, you and I ought
not to be having this conversation
at all without his permission.

Vannis stands abruptly...

VANNIS

I'm sorry, Captain.
(w/ feeling)
Please believe me - I am sorry.
But there's nothing I can do.

Vannis turns and leaves the room, heading back out into
Ops. Kira is left disappointed and defeated.

But then she hardens. They have another plan. She just has
to hope it works.

BLACK OUT:

END OF ACT ONE

ACT TWO

FADE IN:

11 INT. DS9 - PROMENADE

QUARK is busy haranguing a nameless Ferengi waiter in the doorway of his bar, as the usual crowd goes on around him.

QUARK
How many times have I told you? No
free samples. Evah!

The waiter slinks away. Quark turns and spots...

...Dax leading Gard and Odan down the Promenade. He tenses - he recognises Gard from the events of season 8. As he watches, the three Trill head into the Infirmary...

12 INT. DS9 - INFIRMARY

...and as they cross the threshold, Dax calls out...

DAX
Julian --

TARSES looks up from the CMO desk. Awkward moment.

DAX
Simon. I am... so sorry. Just
force of habit.

TARSES
That's alright, Commander. It'll
take us all a while to adjust.

Gard observes this all with some interest. Where has Bashir gone? And what happened between him and Dax?

DAX
Mister Gard, this is Doctor Simon
Tarses, DS9's new Chief Medical
Officer. Simon, this is Hiziki
Gard of the Trill Defence Force.

Not strictly true, but not the time to go into all that.

TARSES

Mister Gard. What can I do for you?

GARD

I'd like you to run a full medical scan on Mister Odan here, please. With particular attention to the condition of his symbiosis.

Curious, Tarses gives Odan a once over...

TARSES

Alright. Nurse, prepare a bio-bed for a full scan, please.

Etana emerges from another room at Tarses' summons. But as she enters, she spots Gard, and stops dead...

FLASHBACK - 8x20 "TWIST OF FAITH"

At the first Federation signing ceremony in the Wardroom, Gard raises the Trill superweapon and fires it at Shakaar. The weapon basically obliterates half of Shakaar's head.

BACK TO SCENE

Etana tightens, cold and sneering...

ETANA

What is he doing here?

DAX

It's alright, Kol. I'll vouch for him - for the moment at least.

Gard isn't offended by Etana's outburst, but he's not about to apologise either. Once again, he was just doing his job.

Etana moves into the surgical suite and begins to boot up the bio-bed. Tarses guides Odan into the room behind her...

TARSES

He's clearly on some pretty heavy sedatives. I won't get a clean reading with all that stuff running through him.

He leaves Dax to handle Odan, while he heads back to the infirmary pharmacy. Once there, he begins searching through the rows of silver metallic canisters on the shelves.

He picks one up to check its contents, but pauses. Shakes it a bit. It's empty. He puts it down and picks up another - also empty. And a third. Confused, he calls out...

TARSES

Etana?

Etana reappears at the threshold of the surgical suite...

ETANA

Yes, Doctor?

TARSES

Why are all these asinolyathin canisters empty?

ETANA

I didn't know they were.

TARSES

I need you to keep the pharmacy stocked at all times, Nurse. Never know when we'll need it.

ETANA

I know, Doctor. And I filled up the entire stock only last week. I could have sworn I did.

TARSES

Well, apparently not. Just keep an eye on it in future, yeah?

ETANA

(baffled)

Of course, Doctor...

Tarses eventually finds the canister he was looking for, opens it and pulls out one of the drug capsules. He slots the capsule into a spare hypospray and returns to the surgical suite, where Odan is now lying on the bio-bed.

TARSES

Alright, this should cancel out
whatever sedative you gave him.

Tarses INJECTS Odan with the hypo, switches on the bio-bed
to run, goes over to the screens to read the results...

TARSES

The symbiont looks different to
yours, Commander. Larger.

DAX

Odan is much older than me. He was
already on his eighth host when I
was only on my first.

TARSES

Interesting. And what about you,
Mister Gard? How many hosts have
you had?

GARD

More than probably any other Trill
you've ever heard of.

TARSES

If it keeps growing over time,
doesn't that get uncomfortable for
the host after a while?

GARD

That's the price we pay, Doctor.
Eventually even the most suitable
host simply cannot accommodate the
symbiont anymore. But Odan should
be a long way off that.

TARSES

(back to readings)

Neuro-chemical connection looks
solid enough... Isoboramine levels
are stable. No physical trauma...
although there is some interesting
scarring on the wrists and neck.

He looks to Gard for an explanation. Gard gives him none.

TARSES

Alright. Well, if you say there's something wrong with him, I can only tell you it's not physical.

GARD

So, psychological then.

Tarses and Gard look to Dax - this is her playground now...

13 INT. DS9 - DAX'S QUARTERS

Odan sits on the couch in Dax's almost-empty quarters. He's not sedated anymore, but still uncommunicative. Dax sits nearby - but not too near - trying to get through to him...

DAX

Kinjer? Can you hear me?

ODAN

(small)

Of course I can hear you.

DAX

Sorry. It's just you haven't said anything since I brought you back from the Infirmary.

ODAN

When everything you say makes them drug you into a stupor, you learn not to bother.

DAX

I won't sedate you, Kinjer. I want to hear whatever you want to say. I want to try and help you.

Odan subtly shrugs, sullen and withdrawn. Eventually, he looks up, studies her. Still doesn't raise his voice...

ODAN

You're Dax?

DAX

That's right.

ODAN
You've changed.

DAX
Three hundred years and eight
different bodies will do that.

ODAN
Do you remember her? Lela?

DAX
I remember. And I remember you
too. You were...
(racks brains)
...Darzen Odan then, right?

ODAN
I remember them all. Every...
single... one.

DAX
(curious)
Why is that a bad thing? Isn't
that how it's supposed to work?

ODAN
Do you remember everything from
those three hundred years? Aren't
there some parts you wish you could
forget, even for just a moment?

DAX
Everyone has parts of their life
they don't like to think about.
That's just normal.

ODAN
(scoff)
Normal. I wish. I can't forget it,
Dax. Not any of it. I kept telling
them, over and over. They didn't
hear me. You know the Symbiosis
Commission likes to... mess with
your mind. So I took care of it
myself. What else could I do?
Only they wouldn't let me.

DAX

Nobody wants someone else to kill themselves, Kinjer. You can't blame them for that.

ODAN

What if that's all there is?

DAX

What do you mean?

ODAN

Death. All of it. Constantly. I can't forget.

Dax thinks she might understand what the problem is now...

DAX

You... remember your deaths? All of them?

ODAN

Every... single... one.

Odan withdraws into the couch. Dax slumps back too, worried and disturbed - this isn't supposed to happen...

14 INT. DS9 - HABITAT RING CORRIDOR

Dax is confronting Gard...

DAX

Why didn't you tell me, Gard? He remembers his deaths. That's not supposed to happen!

GARD

It's hardly impossible, Dax. It's simply that most joined Trill repress such memories. And it's certainly no reason to try and kill yourself and end one of the precious few joinings that still exist. The question remains... how are you going to fix him?

DAX

Just take him back to Trill, tell
them to listen to what their
patient is trying to tell them,
and leave me out of it.

GARD

So you're refusing to help?

Is that what she's doing? Doesn't like the sound of that...

15 **INT. DS9 - TARAN'ATAR'S QUARTERS**

TARAN'ATAR looms threateningly, thundering over VANNIS...

TARAN'ATAR

You spoke to Kira without my
permission?!

VANNIS

We are trying to resolve this
issue! Kira wants to work with
the Dominion, whereas you are as
stubborn and disobedient as ever.

TARAN'ATAR

I do not obey Kira, or you! I obey
the Founders only!

VANNIS

You do not even do that! The
Founder instructed you to work
towards closer relationships
with the Alpha Quadrant, not to
squander our hard-won respect on
a petty and inexplicable grudge!

TARAN'ATAR

I am the Ambassador! I do not need
to explain myself to you.

VANNIS

What explanation could possibly be
sufficient for disobeying the
Founder so flagrantly?

(more)

VANNIS (cont)

You are a failure, Taran'atar. You have been a failure from the moment you were given this assignment.

(sneer)

I should have killed you when I had the chance.

Taran'atar looms ever closer, growls deeply...

TARAN'ATAR

Are you threatening me?

VANNIS

You are Jem'Hadar! I am the Vorta!
That is the order of things!

Taran'atar grins sourly, reaches out sharply and SNAPS Vannis's neck. The Vorta slumps to the deck, dead on the spot. Taran'atar turns away with a sneer...

TARAN'ATAR

Taran'atar to station security.

CENN (comm)

This is Major Cenn. Go ahead,
Ambassador.

TARAN'ATAR

Send a maintenance crew to my quarters. I need someone to take out the trash.

As Taran'atar nonchalantly returns to his desk and switches on the computer...

BLACK OUT:

END OF ACT TWO

ACT THREE

FADE IN:

16 INT. DS9 - HABITAT RING CORRIDOR

VANNIS's obviously dead body lies on a STRETCHER as it is carried out of Taran'atar's quarters by Starfleet extras. Eyes closed in rest, but bruised and torn around the neck.

TARSES is professional, concentrating on the job. ETANA sends angry, scared glares at Taran'atar. CENN holds back a half dozen civilians who have gathered at the commotion.

TARAN'ATAR watches this, outwardly defiant and uncaring. But inside, he's worried. Why did he do that? What is wrong with him? And why can't he say anything about it?

DAX is out in the corridor, watching the procession with a clenched jaw. GARD stands beside her. They both watch as Vannis's dead body is carried past them to a turbolift...

GARD

Did you know her?

DAX

Only in passing. I never really
took the time. I should have.

Tarses, Etana and the extras disappear into the turbolift with the body. Taran'atar lets the door to his quarters close. Cenn shoos the civilians away - nothing to see here.

17 INT. DS9 - KIRA'S OFFICE

The door opens and Dax strides in. And she is *pissed*.

DAX

Nerys, what the hell is going on?

KIRA

What do you mean?

DAX

I mean Taran'atar. Do you know
what he just did?

KIRA

...I know.

DAX

And? What are you going to do about it?

KIRA

There's nothing I can do, Dax.
It's internal Dominion politics.

DAX

Oh, that's bull. If Quark killed one of his own waiters, you'd be on him like the very dogs of hell.

KIRA

It's not his fault.

DAX

How many does it take before it is his fault, Nerys? What does it take to make him responsible for his own actions? Or is this all because he's your own little piece of Odo?

KIRA

(coldly furious)
You stop right there.

Dax realises she went too far. She slumps into the seat...

DAX

Is there something going on here, Nerys? I guess I can't say I know Taran'atar particularly well. But his reactions lately, even with all the crazy stuff that's happened to him... they just don't make sense.

Kira bites her lip. She's going to have to do it. She opens a hidden FLAP on her desk, and presses a BUTTON inside it.

LIGHTS burst into life in the corners, bathing the office in a dim blue glow. Doors audibly CLUNK with heavy locks.

Dax watches, shocked - what the hell? Looks back to Kira, more confused than ever. Kira looks back sadly...

KIRA

It does make sense... if you know
what I know.

18 EXT. SPACE - VULCAN ORBIT

Appropriately golden and sandy, even from space. The grungy freighter is in orbit, along with a few other ships and one of the giant mushroom-shaped Starfleet space stations...

19 INT. VULCAN CAVES

Dark and shadowy, but not cold. In fact it's quite warm, and Vaughn and Ro are suffering slightly from all the dust and sweat. They lurk silently in an alcove, waiting.

Finally there's the sound of BOOTS on the rocky surface. They tense, wary. The footsteps get closer, and closer... and then stop. A calm, measured voice speaks...

SAKEEL (o.s.)

These passages are more complex
than the brain of a human.

Vaughn relaxes, almost smiles. It's code. He steps out of the shadows into the cave passage proper, Ro follows...

VAUGHN

But nowhere near as much fun.

Inspecting the stone walls is Vulcan male SAKEEL. Middle-aged, uniformed, as exact and unemotional as any other Vulcan. Sakeel turns to Vaughn, makes note of Ro...

SAKEEL

Elias.

VAUGHN

Sakeel. This is Ro Laren, a new
associate of mine. Ro, this is
Sakeel. A useful man to know.

Ro gets the subtext - one of them. She notes the uniform.

RO
You're V'Shar.

SAKEEL
Correct.

VAUGHN
Having a man inside Vulcan
Homeworld Security has been very
handy. Not least now.

SAKEEL
I am motivated to help. But I must
inform you, no woman such as you
described works for the regional
government in Shi'al, nor has one
ever done so. There is no record
of such a woman existing at all.

RO
She obviously exists. We met her.
I saw the records.

SAKEEL
I believe you. Therefore I must
conclude that Section Thirty-One
were more successful in their goal
to purge those records than I was
in retrieving them.

RO
There has to be something! A birth
record, a school report --

VAUGHN
Ro, if Sakeel says he's checked,
then believe me, he's checked. It
was a long shot anyway.

SAKEEL
I concur. On the second matter - I
have spoken with a contact among
the Elders of Gol. They confirm
no-one has come to them for the
removal of a *katra* in some years.

RO
She's still got it? Why?

VAUGHN
Maybe she means to use it for
intel on the alternate universe.
I wouldn't put it past them.

SAKEEL
I regret I could not be of more
service on this occasion, Elias.

VAUGHN
That's alright, Sakeel. I'm
grateful that you tried. Come on
Ro - we should be going.

With a nod of thanks, Vaughn turns to walk away into the
caves. Ro follows, but turns as Sakeel calls after them...

SAKEEL
It has been agreeable to make
your acquaintance, Miss Ro. I
anticipate further mutually
satisfactory interactions.

RO
(nonplussed)
Back at ya.

Vaughn and Ro leave in one direction, Sakeel in the other.

20 INT. DS9 - MAIN OPS CENTRE

Kira's office door opens, and DAX emerges, reeling from
everything Kira has told her. NOG notices her state...

NOG
Ezri...? Are you okay?

She blinks, schools her features to hide the shock...

DAX
Oh hey Nog. Yeah, I'm fine. Just
the... uh... Vannis thing. Kinda
hard to get my head around it.

NOG
Sorry to say, I'm not shocked at
all. It was just a matter of time
if you ask me.

DAX
I didn't ask you.

Nog flinches at the harsh tone. Dax winces again...

DAX
Sorry, Nog. Just... bad day. As
you were.

Dax walks to the turbolift, and we go aboard with her...

21 INT. DS9 - TURBOLIFT (CONTINUOUS)

Alone now, Dax looks up to the turbolift's ceiling, filled
with fear and concern. She mutters to herself.

DAX
Oh, Julian... what kind of mess
have you got yourself into now?

She continues to worry for his safety...

CUT TO:

22 INT. STARFLEET BANQUET HALL

POP - the champagne cork bubbles over to the amusement and
celebration of the gathered CROWD of high-level Starfleet
officers, all in pristine white dress uniforms. A server
pours over a pyramid of glasses, the liquid tumbling down.

Welcome to the annual Admirals Dinner Party - or at least
the cocktails portion of the evening. Pockets of people of
various species, all small-talking and getting along. Among
them, laughing and celebrating with the rest, is BASHIR.

The doctor turns towards the buffet table, overflowing with
delicacies from across the Federation. He browses up and
down, trying to decide what to eat...

Just as he chooses a simple bread roll, a friendly voice comes from beside him...

BATANIDES (o.s.)
You shouldn't fill up on bread,
you know. There's a whole six
course meal to come yet.

Bashir turns to see Admiral BATANIDES browsing with him...

BASHIR
Admiral Batanides. Good to see you
again. Enjoying the party?

BATANIDES
I am, thank you. And you? I hope
you're feeling suitably honoured.
It's rare for anyone below captain
to be invited to this thing.

BASHIR
I guess that's what having friends
in high places does for you.

BATANIDES
To friends in high places.

She CLINKS her own glass of red wine to his of champagne.
They grab plates and chat as they pick bits of food...

BATANIDES
Did I hear you have an eidetic
memory, Doctor?

BASHIR
As a matter of fact, yes I do.

BATANIDES
Oh, I would love to have that. To
remember every little thing -
like, oh what's his name, the
captain of the *Musashi*. I should
know, I put him there...

Meanwhile, Batanides is struggling to manage her plate and
her glass and pick up food as well. Bashir watches her...

BASHIR

Need a spare hand there, Admiral?

BATANIDES

Where's a Triexian when you need one, right?

Bashir chuckles, just as Batanides' valiant struggle fails. The plate SLIPS from her grasp, the glass TIPS over and red wine POURS all down the front of her clean white uniform.

BATANIDES

Damn it!

Bashir immediately moves to help - takes her glass, grabs napkins, passes them to her. She dabs away at her uniform - it's only making it worse. With an exasperated sigh, she grabs her combadge off her uniform, hands it to Bashir....

BATANIDES

Hold this for me, will you?

She proceeds to strip off the uniform jacket to the grey undershirt - the stain has already started to seep through.

BATANIDES

Oh, hell. The quartermaster's mad enough at me already after the commemorative plate fiasco. I'm gonna have to go and change...

She turns and walks away through the crowd...

BASHIR

Admiral, your combadge...

But she's gone. Amused and befuddled, he slips the combadge into his pocket and turns back to the buffet table. After another moment, another voice comes from the other side...

ROSS (o.s.)

Ah, Marta. She's a delightful woman, but I wouldn't be at all surprised if she manages to set off a photon torpedo in her own living room someday.

Bashir turns to find Ads ROSS gazing off after Batanides from the table. He nods his acknowledgements to Bashir...

BASHIR

She seems harmless enough to me.

ROSS

Perhaps. I'm glad I ran into you,
Doctor. Our mutual friend sends
his regards.

Bashir pauses, and looks plainly at Ross. This is it...

BASHIR

I don't know that I'd use the word
"friend," exactly. For one thing,
I've been waiting for him to get
in touch for weeks.

ROSS

As it happens, I'm meeting him
for drinks later tonight, after
dinner. You're welcome to tag
along, if you like.

BASHIR

Thank you, Admiral, I'd like that
a great deal.

Ross turns and mingles back into the party.

Bashir watches him go, and takes a deep breath. Steadies his nerves. This is where it all starts...

BLACK OUT:

END OF ACT THREE

ACT FOUR

FADE IN:

23 INT. DS9 - DOCKING RING CORRIDOR

Dax waits by the airlock, mind a million miles away. The airlock rolls open, and Vannis stands there. Or rather VANNIS-4, just as troubled as Dax - she *did* just die...

24 INT. DS9 - DAX'S QUARTERS

The Vorta sits and nibbles unenthusiastically from a plate of nuts and berries, while Dax sips a rokassa juice...

DAX

How are you handling it?

VANNIS

This is not my first death. Though it is the first time I've been killed by one of my own soldiers.

Vannis frowns to herself, trying to figure it all out...

VANNIS

I do not understand. Through all my lives, I have always strived to serve the Founders. Not just to the best of my ability, but to the best of any Vorta's ability.

DAX

That's a noble goal.

VANNIS

But I have to admit... this is the hardest assignment I ever received. I must not fail at it, but...

(shakes head)

Jem'Hadar should obey Vorta. That is the order of things. But he... he does not obey me. He is like no Jem'Hadar I have ever met. I don't know how to relate to him. Clearly my last approach was unsuccessful.

DAX
Vannis, can I ask you something?
It might be a bit personal...

VANNIS
You have been kind to me. What
would you like to know?

DAX
(hesitant)
Do you remember it? The moment
when you died?

VANNIS
(simply)
Of course. All Vorta remember. A
learning experience - how not to
make the same mistake.

DAX
Trill aren't supposed to remember.
We're trained to suppress it - to
concentrate on the memories of
life, not of death. Or at least,
most Trill are trained for that.

VANNIS
But not you?

DAX
I didn't get the full training.
Most of the time I can put it out
of my mind, but sometimes some-
thing will jog my memory...

On Dax as she remembers...

FLASHBACK - 1x01 "EMISSARY"

Wizened old Curzon lies on the operating table as the Dax
symbiont is transferred to Jadzia...

BACK TO SCENE

Dax closes her eyes, pushing away the memory. When she
opens them again, Vannis is gazing at her, curious...

VANNIS

Who would have ever imagined that
Vorta and Trill would find
something in common?

DAX

We both die, but keep living.
(thoughtful)
But what about the in-between?
When the first body has died, but
the second hasn't... "activated"
yet? Do you feel anything?

Vannis stops to ponder the question...

DAX

I mean for us, without a host to
interact with the world through,
the symbiont is left blind and
deaf. We're aware, but incapable
of anything. It's... quite a
disturbing experience.

VANNIS

For Vorta, there is nothing. No
awareness, no sensation. We die,
and know nothing else until we
reawaken in the cloning tanks.
When we are not serving the
Founders... we do not exist.

That's rather disquieting. Dax has more on her mind...

DAX

Recently... I was afraid I was
about to die. See, there was an
incident on the Trill homeworld...
terrorists attacked. They murdered
almost all the symbionts.

VANNIS

You feared you would be among them.

DAX

No, that's not what I mean. I never
doubted I'd survive that.

DAX (cont)

I've been through a lot, I just assumed I'd get through that too. And being one of the few left... just made me all the more special.

VANNIS

Vorta are not special. Kill one, make another. Clean and simple. But if that is not when you feared death... when was it?

DAX

The *Luna*. I was full of that same arrogance, sure I was following my grand destiny as a life-form almost unique in the galaxy. But then there was the accident in engineering... and I ran. I saved myself. In that second, I thought - I'm too important. I can't die here. I have to save the symbiont. And even though the thought passed in an instant... I haven't been able to look in the mirror since.

VANNIS

I do not regret dying if it is in the service of the Founders. I do not regret saving myself either, if that would be in the service of the Founders. Mourn your dead if you must, but do not doubt that you deserve to live. There is always more you can do for your leaders.

Dax ponders quietly...

DAX

People I know... people I care about... they're out there right now risking their lives to do the right thing. The least I can do is face my own demons.

CUT TO:

25 **INT. DS9 - DAX'S QUARTERS**

Dax now sits opposite Kinjer in her quarters...

DAX
Tell me everything, Kinjer. Start
at the beginning, and don't leave
anything out.

Odan prepares to do exactly that...

26 **INT. DS9 - DAX'S QUARTERS**

Odan is asleep on Dax's bed. Dax silhouettes in the door,
watching him toss and turn. Then she turns away...

...and sees Gard there, watching Odan over her shoulder.

GARD
Thank you for agreeing to help him.

DAX
You were probably more right than
you know, bringing him to me. I
might be the only one who can
understand how he feels. And...
I need to help someone.

Gard wonders what exactly that last part means...

27 **INT. DS9 - DAX'S QUARTERS**

Dax sits opposite Kinjer as he talks...

ODAN
I loved a Starfleet woman once.
Across three bodies I loved her.
I could have been happy... but
she couldn't handle it.

The things he's saying spark Dax's own memories...

FLASHBACK - 6x26 "TEARS OF THE PROPHETS"

In the Bajoran shrine, Jadzia judders and shakes as the
possessed Dukat uses *pagh-wraith* energy to kill her...

FLASHBACK - 7x03 "AFTERIMAGE"

In a corridor, Worf completely blanks Ezri, leaving her surprised and hurt...

BACK TO SCENE

Ezri tenses against the memory, but allows it to come, allows it to inform her sympathy for Kinjer...

28 INT. DS9 - DAX'S QUARTERS

Gard and Dax discuss...

GARD

I'm glad. I was afraid there might be some personal issues between you and me that could have affected your decision.

DAX

Oh, don't get me wrong - I'm still holding a grudge. I haven't forgiven you for killing Minister Shakaar. Not completely. Or for killing me, for that matter.

FLASHBACK - 8x05 "REFLECTIONS"

Joran Dax has his arm hooked around a woman's neck and a jagged piece of glass to her throat.

An angry Trill police man holds a weapon on him and shouts to let the woman go. Gard fires, Joran goes down...

BACK TO SCENE

DAX (cont)

Or that you snuck around as part of a secret underground spy organisation to do it.

GARD

I won't apologise for removing threats and saving lives, Dax.

DAX
I'm not asking you to. Even if I
don't like that you did it, I do
understand why you did it.

(beat)

Plus... it's been made clear to
me recently that being part of a
secret spy group doesn't
necessarily make you... "evil."

Another intriguing little titbit for Gard...

29 EXT. COBBLED STREET - NIGHT

Ross and Bashir walk together in awkward silence over the
old-fashioned cobbles. Bashir takes note of the location,
the gently swirling mist, the classic old street-lights.

As they walk, Bashir readies for the meeting ahead...

30 INT. DS9 - DAX'S QUARTERS

Gard and Dax...

GARD
How flattering.

DAX
Everyone's got their problems.
Doesn't mean they shirk their
responsibilities.

31 INT. VULCAN CAVES

Vaughn and Ro work their way through a labyrinth of caves.
Ro is dirty, sweaty, tired, and in a distinctly bad mood.
They pass an opening into a small, unlit cavern...

Ro pauses, looks into the hole. Vaughn is confused - why?
She gestures exactly why - bathroom. Vaughn turns his back
and leaves her to herself. Ro clambers through the hole...

In the small dark space, Ro hunkers down, lets out all the
tension and shakes she's been hiding. Breathing deep, she
reaches into her boot. And there's a hypospray in there.

Looking at it with hunger, she raises it to her neck and injects the painkillers. She gives herself another moment as the drugs flow through her, lets the shakes subside.

Outside in the main cave, Vaughn is waiting. At the sound of Ro emerging, he turns to greet her. She seems happier and more relaxed now. Together, they carry on their way...

32 INT. DS9 - DAX'S QUARTERS

Gard and Dax...

DAX

So I want to help Odan if I can.
And even if I can't, I just want
him to feel like there's someone
who will actually listen and not
dismiss him out of hand.

GARD

Is that what you think I'm doing?

DAX

I think... you're doing the same
thing the Symbiosis Commission is
doing - the same thing I was
doing. We're all so worried about
the symbionts, about saving them
no matter what, that we're not
seeing the obvious solution.

GARD

Which is?

Dax moves back to the bedroom doorway, looks in on the
still fitfully sleeping Odan...

DAX

Break the bond.

As Gard realises with resignation what she means...

33 INT. COLE'S APARTMENT - LIVING ROOM

Old mahogany panelling, comfy leather armchairs, paintings
and sculptures on the walls, a roaring fire in the hearth.

A KNOCK at the large wooden door, a WHINE of old hinges as it creaks open. Ross enters, his face like death. He really doesn't want to be here or be doing what he's doing. Behind him is Bashir, still mentally recording everything.

One of the armchairs is turned to face the fire, hiding its occupant. Ross finds this especially rude...

ROSS

He's here. I've brought him. And
don't even think of using me as
your errand boy ever again.

COLE

(still hidden)

I appreciate your feelings,
Admiral. Thank you for your help.
You can go now.

That this man would just dismiss him like that, without even looking at him face to face, makes Ross furious. As he turns to go, he exchanges a look with Bashir - one that says "you'd better have a damn good reason for this."

With the door closed, the chair's occupant finally deigns to stand - of course it is COLE (8x08 "Abyss"). Resolutely normal, not in any kind of uniform or at all threatening. He seems almost as apprehensive about this as Bashir...

COLE

Doctor Bashir. I have to say - I
never expected to see you again.
And I'm very curious as to why I'm
seeing you now...

As Cole and Bashir face each other across the room...

BLACK OUT:

END OF ACT FOUR

ACT FIVE

FADE IN:

34 INT. COLE'S APARTMENT - LIVING ROOM

Cole is back in his chair, sipping a mug of hot tea. Bashir now sits in a second chair, sniffs his own mug warily...

COLE

Doctor, please. If I wanted to kill you, why would I have the admiral bring you all the way to my own home? I could kill you anywhere.

Bashir sips at the drink. It's actually quite pleasant.

BASHIR

I've been waiting for weeks, you know. Just keeping myself occupied with debriefings and conferences. And beginning to wonder if you would ever respond to my hints.

COLE

You can understand my caution, Doctor. After all, how many times have you called us an abomination on the face of the galaxy, or a pox to be stamped out, or some other overdramatic epithet? And now here you sit, begging to join the party?

BASHIR

I don't beg, Mister Cole. But as I've indicated in my logs, a certain situation has arisen on Deep Space Nine that, in all good conscience, I find I cannot be a party to.

COLE

Yes, this whole Ascendant thing. Kind of a mess, isn't it? What I'm not clear on, however... is why you imagine my organisation should care one way or the other.

BASHIR

You once said to me, and I quote,
"People die all the time. It's
simply a matter of who, how, and how
many". As much as it pains me to say
it, if anyone has to die, then I'd
rather it not be the people I've
sworn to protect on Bajor and DS-
Nine. Especially since the Eav'oq
don't seem to care if they die
anyway. And since you claim that
your *raison d'être* is to protect
Federation lives, I thought that
might appeal to you. Or am I wrong?

Cole takes a moment to think it all over. He sips his tea,
quite content to take his time and not rush anything...

COLE

So you'll betray your friends in
order to protect them?

BASHIR

That's not what I'm doing.

COLE

I'm not judging, Doctor. It's all
semantics anyway. I just want you
to grasp how they'll see you once
this is over.

BASHIR

I don't want them to know. They're
good, honest people.

Cole sips his tea, and chuckles to himself...

BASHIR

What?

COLE

Oh nothing. Private joke. If I
agree to work with you on this,
Doctor - to commit resources and
personnel and capital - what will
you give me in return?

BASHIR

I'm giving you me. Isn't that what you've always wanted?

COLE

I'll grant we've expended a lot of effort to convince you that we can work together. That alone makes me wonder why those efforts should have suddenly borne fruit.

BASHIR

I won't pretend I've converted, if that's what you mean. You wouldn't believe me if I did. I'm only saying there's a cause that's dear to my heart, and I need your help to see it through. It doesn't mean I'm working for you full time.

COLE

Oh Doctor... you've been working for us for years. You just refuse to admit it to yourself.

Bashir goes quiet. Cole takes silence as assent...

COLE

You realise I'm going to be keeping a very close eye on you, of course? Testing you constantly?

BASHIR

I'd expect nothing less.

COLE

Alright. Let's say you've convinced me. What next?

BASHIR

Next... we work out a plan for how to stop Kira from pulling us all into another war.

Cole smiles modestly. He knows so much more than Bashir...

35 **INT. DS9 - INFIRMARY**

Starting on Kira...

KIRA

Are you sure about this?

Revealing that she's talking to Dax, Gard and Tarses in the main room of the Infirmary...

GARD

I agree with Commander Dax, Captain.
I think a controlled separation is
the best chance for the continued
health of host and symbiont.

KIRA

(to Tarses)

And you... you're sure about this
serum of Julian's?

TARSES

it's still officially experimental.
But Doctor Bashir's notes indicate
that it worked in the field, and on
a statistically significant number
of patients. I'm prepared to use it
- with the patient's consent.

KIRA

Can he give consent? If he's as
messed up psychologically as you
say, is he legally capable of it?

DAX

I think he's made his wishes clear,
Captain. He's been trying to end
this joining for a while. At least
this way both of them can survive
and get on with their lives.

Taking that on board, Kira steps through into the surgical
suite. Odan sits on the bio-bed, no longer sedated...

KIRA

Mister Odan, I'm Captain Kira.

KIRA (cont)

I'm in command here. Before we go through with this, I need to ask - are you absolutely certain? From the little I know on the subject, this isn't the kind of thing you can change your mind about later.

ODAN

Captain... I appreciate your concerns. But I have seen and felt nothing but death for two years. Constantly dying, but never able to actually die from it? Had I known this was an option, I would have done it a long time ago. So yes, I'm ready. I consent to this in the strongest possible terms.

Kira can't really empathise with what he's going through, but she can sympathise. She nods for Tarses to carry on.

TARSESES

Alright. Clear the room, please. I need to prepare for surgery. Nurse?

Etana guides Odan back onto the bio-bed. He looks up at Dax, a serene smile on his face, a silent thank you.

Kira, Dax and Gard emerge into the main room. Once there...

KIRA

So how are you handling it?

Kira is talking about more than just Odan. So is Dax...

DAX

I'll be fine. Just gonna take a little getting used to. Seeing someone else in that room.

Kira nods reassuringly, moves to leave. Dax and Gard...

GARD

You made the right choice, Dax.

DAX

Did I? Look at us, Gard. You and me... we get to keep our symbionts. Again. All around us, joinings are ending. I'm destroying another Trill symbiosis right now. But not us. We just keep going. I guess we're... "special."

Gard just gives her another silent stare down...

36 INT. DS9 - TARAN'ATAR'S QUARTERS

The door opens, and VANNIS enters. Tense but professional. Not looking forward to this, but it has to be done.

TARAN'ATAR is waiting for her. He can't apologise for what he did... as much as he might want to.

VANNIS

Ambassador. What are your orders?

TARAN'ATAR

Return to the Idran system. You will continue to monitor, compile data on current activities of the Ascendants... and about the state of the Dominion. I will call for you if I need you.

VANNIS

Yes, Ambassador.

She turns to leave, but he calls her back...

TARAN'ATAR

Vannis... thank you. For your assistance.

She calmly considers her response, resigned to her role...

VANNIS

It is... the order of things, Ambassador.

And she leaves.

37 **INT. DS9 - DOCKING RING CORRIDOR**

A security agent carries a portable SYMBIONT POD into the airlock, the liquid sloshing. Dax stands nearby, observing.

She turns to see Gard gently lead Kinjer (no longer Odan) towards the airlock. Gard is gentle and considerate with him. Dax smiles, pleased that Gard can be a nice guy...

DAX

Kinjer. How are you feeling?

KINJER

A bit tender right now, Commander.
And weirdly light. But I'm looking
forward to getting my own mind back.

DAX

Keep in touch.

With a warm goodbye, Kinjer heads into the airlock...

GARD

Dax... I've been thinking. If you
do feel strongly about protecting
the symbionts and getting Trill
society back into joining shape,
then come back with me.

DAX

Come back... to Trill?

GARD

You said you were just waiting for
your next assignment. This could
be it. Come home, join the Star-
fleet contingent on the homeworld,
and work with me to help the
symbionts. That's what I've been
doing, you know.

Dax smiles uncertainly - Gard is surprising her...

DAX

That sounds like a wonderful idea,
Gard... but I can't.

GARD

Why not? Come on, Dax - it's obvious there's something you're not telling me.

Dax pauses to think it through. What is she allowed to say?

DAX

Friends of mine are in danger out there right now. I can't leave until I know they're safe. But thank you for the offer. And I hope you'll hold it open for me.

Gard is curious, but he of all people understands about operational secrecy. He decides to let it go...

GARD

Then until next time.

He steps into the airlock and away. Dax watches the airlock roll closed, and with a thoughtful nod, she turns to leave. Walking down the corridor, she worries about Bashir...

38 EXT. COBBLED STREET - NIGHT

The same general area on Earth as before, but a different street, enough to signify that we are not at Cole's house.

39 INT. BASHIR'S BEDROOM

A small bedroom with a single bed and the usual furniture. Earth-style, not Starfleet. Basic but cosy. Bashir stands by the bed, unpacking from his travelling bag.

In the midst of unpacking, he glances over his shoulder, making sure the door behind him is closed. Satisfied that it is, he turns back to his bag, and pulls out what looks like a simple flask, a travel mug for coffee or soup.

Opening the lid of the flask, he reveals a portable version of Vaughn's special transporter module inside. With a press of a button, the blue light at the top shines, casting a no signals, no weapons, no transporters field over the room.

That done, he brings out Admiral Batanides' combadge...

FLASHBACK

Batanides hands the combadge to Bashir...

BATANIDES
Hold this for me, will you?

BACK TO SCENE

Bashir sits on the edge of the bed. Gently prises the cover of the combadge away, revealing the technology inside it...

FLASHBACK

As Bashir and Batanides browse the buffet table...

BATANIDES
Oh what's his name, the captain of
the *Musashi*...

BACK TO SCENE

With a tiny metal tool, he works at the miniature controls inside the badge. He spells the name out as he does it...

BASHIR
Terapane...

Nothing happens. Bashir frowns, thinks a bit more...

BASHIR
Okay... Alexandros.

He inputs the letters... there's a positive BEEP. He smiles with childish pride. And then Vaughn's voice sounds, small and tinny but filled with determination and portent...

VAUGHN (comm)
I hope you're well. You should
know... we are coming.

40 EXT. SPACE

The Trill transport we saw earlier is warping through space on its way home...

41 **INT. TRILL TRANSPORT - QUARTERS**

Darkened for ship's night. A door from the corridor opens, revealing Gard. He pokes his head in...

GARD

Kinjer? Are you asleep?

No response. He steps in further...

GARD

Just wanted to check on you, see
how you're doing.

Another step in. Then he sees something shrouded in the shadows... a pair of boots, swinging loosely in the air.

GARD

Gods damn it!

Gard rushes in to the body, hanging from a sheet tied into a rope and slung over a ceiling beam. He pulls a knife out of his back pocket, slashes at the rope, catches the body before it can fall. He lowers it gently to the ground...

GARD

Oh gods, no...

But it's too late - Kinjer is clearly dead. Gard notices a piece of paper crumpled up in his hand. He pulls it out, flattens it out to read it. It's hand-written, and says...

I CAN STILL REMEMBER

Gard slumps to a sitting position on the floor, next to the body. He hangs his head and sighs.

FADE OUT:

END OF SHOW